

Mackinac Island Community Calls for More Arts, Sports, Less Strife, in School

By Karen Gould

Building a stage and sound system, providing after-school tutoring, offering more healthy lunch options, providing a wider variety of sports, and additional art, music, and drama opportunities, and reducing the tensions between staff and administrators would make Mackinac Island Public School better, say community members and students.

Their comments were made in a survey conducted by the School Improvement Committee and reported to the school board at its meeting Thursday, April 23.

By fall, the committee will make recommendations from the survey to the school board, said committee chair Paul Wandrie, but it does not plan to meet again until

August.

Of the 225 surveys mailed to parents and community members, 34 surveys were completed. Students in sixth through 12th grades submitted another 39 surveys.

Although written comments were optional, many respondents added them, said committee member Urvana Morse, who presented the results.

The survey solicited comments about infrastructure, instruction, library books, technology, the school lunch program, sports, needed materials, courses, and the "coffee with the superintendent" program.

Concerning school infrastructure, which includes building, grounds, and maintenance, 11 peo-

ple said school cleaning needs to be improved. Five people said they had concerns about ice in the front of the building and on the hill leading to the side door and playground area.

Under instructional services, of the 24 comments received from students and parents, all wanted the school to offer after-school tutoring.

Most respondents to the library questions asked for a greater variety of books and more material oriented to high school students.

Seven of 12 comments about school technology said the respondents were satisfied with the technology available to students.

Less fried food, less processed food, and more healthy options are needed on the lunch menu, was the

consensus of 20 respondents, but the salad bar is successful and some said they would like it to be expanded.

About 29 survey comments called for more variety in athletic programs, particularly for middle school students. Responders said they would like to see programs in football, tennis, and baseball.

If funding were available, sur-

vey respondents suggested the school needs a stage with a sound system.

Art and music courses are needed to go along with drama and a foreign language, some said. Auto repair and home economics classes also made the wish list.

A question on the survey asked if more people would attend school board meetings if child care was provided. Out of 22 comments, only four said child care would make a difference for them.

Under additional comments, the need for more music, art, and drama generated the most comments. Coming in second was a concern over strife among teachers, staff, administration, and the school board.

For a proposed program that would allow residents to discuss school issues over coffee with Superintendent Roger Schrock, respondents said they prefer an evening schedule, rather than during the day.

School Improvement Committee members include Mr. Wandrie, Dr. Schrock, school board member Larry Rickley, student Shelby Mosley, teacher Susan Bennett, and parents Jack Armstrong, Erin Beck, Wendy Nicewander, Craig Bunker, and Urvana Morse.

St. Ignace and Cedarville Schools Eye Wind Energy

By Jonathan Eppley

St. Ignace and Les Cheneaux school districts are participating in a nationwide program to explore the reduction of their energy costs by installing renewable energy sources on school grounds. Clean Green Energy of Brighton announced Tuesday, April 21, the two schools signed agreements to study the idea in its Project EverGREEN Schools program, a national initiative to integrate renewable energy systems at schools. No agreements have been made to install equipment at the schools yet, and the program comes at no cost to the school.

The company plans to conduct surveys over the next year to study wind and solar patterns in the area. If the results are positive and a deal is met, it will design energy systems that may include vertical wind turbines, solar panels, and biomass energy systems. The company will own, install, maintain, and operate any equipment installed at either school, and sell the energy back to the districts at a cost below existing energy rates.

St. Ignace Area Schools Superintendent Mike Springsteen and Les Cheneaux Community Schools Superintendent Rod Goehmann both think the project is a good way for their districts to save on energy costs.

"We're pretty interested in it,"

Mr. Springsteen said. "We'll do an energy survey with them and if what they find out is favorable, we would consider going ahead with some sort of proposal" with the company.

If equipment is installed at either school, students and teachers will be able to track the energy output and environmental impact of the systems on computers provided by Dell.

Rapid River, Hancock, Houghton-Portage, Menominee, Carney-Nadeau, and Crystal Falls-Forest Park school districts are also participating in the program.

Wind turbines will be the main component at the eight U.P. schools, said Richard Kaiser of the company that supplies turbines to Clean Green Energy.

"The one good thing about the Upper Peninsula is there is plenty of wind," he said.

Details of the deals with the eight schools are being finalized, however, Mr. Kaiser said, schools typically save an average of 50% on annual electricity costs.

Congressman Bart Stupak said he supports the program.

"Using the local schools as a teaching lab and model to achieve success should prove very beneficial," he said in a statement.

Clean Green Energy is funded through grants and investors.

Wind Energy Feasibility Study Beginning Near Naubinway

A wind study will assess whether Hiawatha Sportsman's Club near Naubinway will be a productive site for a future wind energy development. The American Wind and Energy Group announced it contracted with the club April 9 to erect two meteorological towers to collect and study wind statistics.

This site is on club land that is within a mile of Lake Michigan.

The Wisconsin-based company is working on the collection of wind energy data and the development of wind farms.

This is one of many possible wind projects across upper Michigan being considered by the company. Its goal is to study wind data at a location for up to two

years which will allow the company to decide whether the area can generate enough wind for a viable wind development site.

Dean Reid of St. Ignace, a planning commissioner for Mackinac County, showed the company this site and others that could be developed. This proposal has been on the agenda as a goal of the county's master plan for years, he said. He has been offered a job with the company to facilitate exploration of other potential wind development sites in northern Michigan.

Wind energy projects are being considered to help Michigan attain its goal of reaching 10% renewable energy production by 2015.



Mark Carlson (left), president of American Wind and Energy Group, holds a signed agreement with Hiawatha Sportsman Club manager Lester Livermore Jr. A wind energy development study will be undertaken on the club's land in Mackinac County. (Photograph courtesy of Dean Reid)

No Write-in Candidates Registered

There are no write-in candidates for the May 5 school elections this year.

Write-in candidates had until Friday, April 24, to register. The deadline to register is 14 days before an election. Anyone not registered is not a candidate and any votes they receive are not counted, said Mackinac County Clerk Mary Kay Tamlyn.

LaSalle Youth To Present Play Sunday



Ten LaSalle High School students are rehearsing "Blues," a one-act play by Jerome McDonough that offers a glimpse into the future of homelessness. The play will be performed Sunday, May 3, at 2 p.m. in the school gymnasium. Set in a vacant lot where homeless people spend the night, the play allows the characters to share their stories and offer advice. Featuring characters from runaway teenagers to a highly educated adult, the play offers the message that homelessness can happen to anyone. The students say they chose the play to bring attention to the homeless and are donating proceeds to Project Hope and the local Habitat for Humanity. At the end of the production, the actors will put on special T-shirts and hats they bought and ask for donations. The production is directed by LaSalle teacher Kathleen Schacht. Taking part in the production are (front row, from left) Morgan Postma, Nickole Lanczak, Angela Cena, Dana Perry; (back) Dustin McKenzie, Lewis Steiner, Ivy Thurston, and Alyssa Rickley. Not pictured are Miska Cardin and Shelby Peters.

Schlehuber Retires From City After 30 Years

By Karen Gould

In 1979, when Jim Schlehuber began working for the City of St. Ignace, the city had just taken over the water department from Edison Sault Electric. Offices were in the Edison Sault building on South State Street and the wastewater treatment plant was on State Street along the Lake Huron shore, across from the post office. At that time, water was pumped into tanks, solids settled, and chlorine was added before it was pumped into the lake.

When hired, his primary job was to read water meters.

"A lot of things have changed since I started," he said. "The water and wastewater department has grown considerably and a lot more is going on than there was back then."

Mr. Schlehuber, 55, retired from his job as the city's chief water and wastewater operator Friday, April 24. Last year, he was named 2008 U.P. Wastewater Operator of the Year by the Michigan Water Environmental Association. He was nominated by his supervisor, Les Therrian, director of the St. Ignace Department of Public Works.

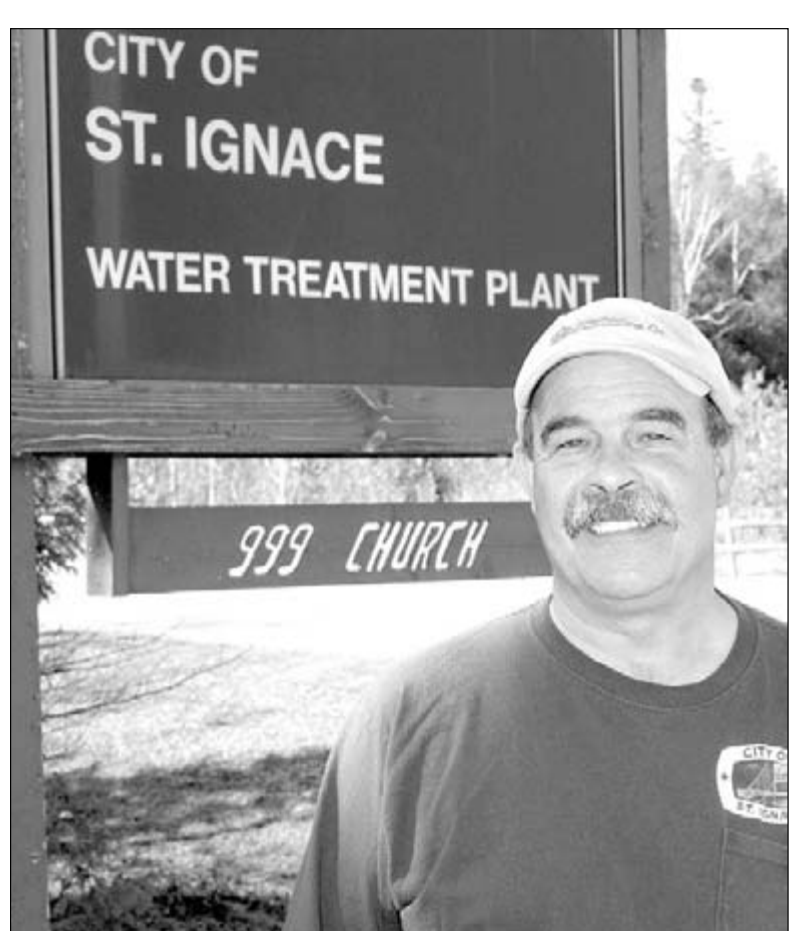
"Jim's strongest points were to be able to work with anybody," Mr. Therrian told *The St. Ignace News* Monday, April 27. He was able to work well with staff and the public.

"He'll be missed," said Mr. Therrian.

During his first winter on the job, Mr. Schlehuber recalls there were 33 water main breaks across the city and 17 were on US-2. At that time, all of the water mains were old, made of cast iron, and not buried very deeply in the ground. Now, many of the city's mains have been replaced with ductile iron and placed deeper in the ground.

"You were never at a loss for things to do," he said. "It's a lot better now. We don't have freeze-ups like we used to and we don't have water main breaks anywhere near what we used to have."

Over the 30 years Mr. Schlehuber has worked for the city, water and wastewater treatment knowledge and technology improved and the state began mandating more testing. A new wastewater treatment facility was constructed just north of the Mackinac



Jim Schlehuber, the city's chief water and wastewater operator, retired Friday, April 24, after a 30-year career.

County Airport. To meet state requirements, the city built filtration systems, including lagoons, aerators, and an ultraviolet disinfection system.

Today, Mr. Schlehuber needs seven licenses for his job, including one for complete water treatment. Monitoring systems, testing water quality, and documenting results are required by the state and operators now must be licensed in various aspects of their jobs. Classes and testing are offered by the state.

His job includes supervising five employees, completing state-required reports, coordinating several monthly water tests that are performed by another agency, and some plant maintenance. His hours are from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., but he is on call 24 hours a day.

A couple of times, he has worked more than 25 hours straight. Once he sat on site turning the pump on and off at the Reagan Street lift station, while the city was waiting for a part. All of the wastewater in town flows through that station.

"That was a little tough," he

remembers. "I'd set the alarm clock on my watch for like every five minutes. I'd catnap. In the middle of the night, it would slow down and it was probably 20 minutes before I'd have to go out there and turn it on. We didn't have any other choice."

Another time, a water thawing job for the *Biscayne Bay* took 26 hours as he and a crew worked to thaw the water line leading to the Coast Guard icebreaker.

"I won't miss those things," he said of the long shifts.

He has served as a unit chair for city employees for five years for the union American Federation of State, County Municipal Employees. He also served as a union steward on two occasions.

As he contemplates his retirement Friday at 3:30 p.m., he said he will miss walking through the familiar door as he begins the day and seeing the people he worked with for many years. Eight full-time people work for the city water and wastewater department.

Fortunately, Mr. Schlehuber already has a full schedule of

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Sentence Is 4 - 15 Years for Roach

Roy Roach, 21, of St. Ignace, who pled guilty to second degree manslaughter for the shooting death of Seth Tamlyn, 20, also of St. Ignace, was sentenced to four to 15 years in state prison in 11th Circuit Court in St. Ignace Thursday, April 23.

Mr. Roach was then taken to Marquette Department of Corrections, where he will be processed and transferred to a prison facility, but which one has yet to be determined, according to Fred Feleppa, county prosecutor.

Mr. Roach pled guilty March 6 to manslaughter, death by weapon aimed with intent but without malice. Three other counts against Mr. Roach had been dropped. They were homicide-murder, being under the influence of alcohol (felony firearms), and use/discharge of firearms weapon under the influence of alcohol or drugs, causing death.

The shooting took place October 28, 2008, at a small party in a Moran Township apartment near St. Ignace. Several people witnessed the incident.

North Case Is Resolved Without Trial

Thomas North of St. Ignace pled no contest Monday, April 20, to one count of election law, wrongful use, incompetency designation, in 92nd District Court in St. Ignace. Mr. North was charged a \$60 fee and was put on probation for six months, after which time the legal case against him will be dismissed, providing his probation is successfully completed. His case had been scheduled for jury trial April 21 and April 22.

Mr. North, a former probate judge in Mackinac and Luce counties, had been charged in October 2008 with four counts of misrepresenting himself as the incumbent in the November 4 election for the judgeship of 92nd District Court. At issue in the case was the use of printed campaign materials in which he referred to himself as "judge." A complaint was filed against him by his opponent in the election, incumbent Judge Beth Gibson of Newberry. Judge Gibson was the winner of the November 4 election.

The other three charges against Mr. North were dismissed by Judge John Fitzgerald of Montmorency County, assigned to 92nd District Court for this case. The case was assigned to a special prosecutor, James Linderman of Emmet County, owing to a conflict of interest for the office of Mackinac County Prosecutor Fred Feleppa.